

Pinnacle Bank hosts meeting to draw local support

At a committee meeting held at Pinnacle Bank Jan. 11, 107 E. Aztec Ave., members from the Alzheimer's Association New Mexico Chapter announced their plans to bring a fundraising event to Gallup.

The association has offices in five different locations cross New Mexico: Farmington, Roswell, Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Las Cruces. They provide information to help people who have been affected in numerous ways by Alzheimer's through support groups and classes, in addition to research towards eliminating the disease, along with reducing the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.

The goal of the meeting, according to information given, is to host an Alzheimer's Walk within the Gallup community on or around Aug. 24, and to have a diverse representation of the community. The location given at the meeting to host the walk was Rio West Mall.

This event is a continuation of the numerous fundraising walks and educational conferences that the association hosted in 2018. Similar events recently included:

- SW Regional Walk in Las Cruces on Sept. 15
- NW Regional Walk in Farmington on Sept. 29
- SE Regional Walk in Roswell on Oct. 13
- Greater Albuquerque Walk on Oct. 20

- NE Regional Walk in Santa Fe on Oct. 20
- Alzheimer's Boot Camp for Family, Friends & Professionals in Las Cruces on Oct. 27
- Alzheimer's Association Caregivers Conference in Albuquerque on Nov. 3.

This also includes community walks that were hosted in Ruidoso, Clayton, Truth or Consequences, and Hobbs in the fall.

Waldon Lynch, one of the meeting chairs, shared statistics from the walk held last year in Farmington. Over $34,640 was raised for the association, and the walk drew 259 different participants across 27 teams.

As a result of this success, Tori Rohrer, from Pinnacle Bank, said that an idea was formed to have a walk like this in Gallup.

To that end, the association is aiming to form at least 20 walk teams that hold at least 200 walkers. The monetary goal is $30,000, with $18,000 coming in donations and $12,000 in sponsorships.

Nicolette Garcia, one of the meeting chairs, said that it is estimated that around 39,000 people had Alzheimer's across the country in 2018, and that number could increase to 53,000 by 2023.

She summarized these numbers and the need for raising awareness in communities because "Alzheimer's affects everyone."

For their goal of raising awareness of Alzheimer's, Vangie Neil, emcee for the meeting, said that it is good that they celebrate the small steps.

"[Because] we made that first step in moving Alzheimer's awareness forward," she added.

Her sentiments were echoed by the others present at the meeting.

"[The events] let the community know that we're here to help," Lynch said.

The committee established that meetings will be held monthly to plan the logistics that will go into holding this event. This includes deciding what other community members would be the best fit for the Walk committee, how to get the word out to the community, and how to pursue sponsors and volunteers to help with the event.

For more information about the association or events, as well as to donate, visit: https://www.alz.org/newmexico

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